What is claimed is:

1.   A method comprising:

modulating the transparency of an image of an object as a function of an angle of incidence of a vector normal to a viewing surface at the surface of the object.

2.   The method of claim 1, wherein the function comprises a cosine function.

3.   The method of claim 1, wherein the function comprises a linear function.

4.   The method of claim 1, wherein the function comprises a non-linear function.

5.   A system comprising:

a display; and

an image of an object projected on the display, where the transparency of the image is modulated as a function of an angle of incidence of a vector, normal to a viewing surface, with the surface of the object.

6.   The system of claim 5, wherein the modulating function comprises a cosine function.

7.   The system of claim 5, wherein the modulating function comprises a linear function.

8.   The system of claim 5, wherein the modulating function comprises a non-linear function.

9.   A system for controlling the transparency of an image of an object, the system comprising:

a display;

a processor capable of driving the display with an image; and

5   a graphics engine capable of running on the processor, generating the image, and modulating the transparency of the image as a cosine function of an angle of incidence of a vector normal to a viewing surface at the surface of the object.

10.   A computer comprising:

a processor;

10   a computer-readable medium; and

a computer program capable of being executed from the computer-readable medium by the processor and modulating the transparency of an image as a function of an angle of incidence of a vector normal to a viewing surface at a surface of an object.

11.   The computer of claim 10, wherein the computer-readable medium comprises a

15   memory.

12.   The computer of claim 10, wherein the modulating function comprises a cosine function.

13.   The computer of claim 10, wherein the modulating function comprises a linear function.

20   14.   The computer of claim 10, wherein the modulating function comprises a non-linear function.

15.   The computer of claim 10, wherein the computer-readable medium comprises a storage device.

16.   A method for generating a transparency factor for an image of an object, the method comprising:

selecting a viewing surface;

determining an angle of incidence created by a vector normal to the viewing surface and the object surface; and

calculating the transparency factor from the angle of incidence.

17.   The method of claim 16, wherein calculating the transparency factor from the angle of incidence comprises the step of:

calculating a cosine of the angle of incidence.

18.   The method of claim 16, wherein calculating the transparency factor from the angle of incidence comprises the step of:

calculating a linear function of the angle of incidence.

19.   The method of claim 16, wherein calculating the transparency factor from the angle of incidence comprises the step of:

calculating a non-linear function of the angle of incidence.

20.   A method comprising:

selecting a mode, the mode is FRONT_ONLY, BOTH_SIDES, or BACK_ONLY;

determining a viewing angle;

determining an object angle;

calculating a theta, theta equals the viewing angle minus the object angle plus pi;

assigning a function of theta to alpha, if the mode is FRONT_ONLY or BOTH_SIDES;

assigning a function of theta minus pi to alpha, if the mode is BACK_ONLY;

comparing alpha to zero;

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assigning zero to alpha, if the mode is FRONT_ONLY and alpha is less than zero;

assigning zero to alpha, if the mode is BACK_ONLY, and alpha less than zero;

assigning minus alpha to alpha, if the mode is BOTH_SIDES, and alpha is less than zero; and

5   assigning a transparency factor to alpha.

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